

REMARKS

Claims 1-10, 12-14 and 16-22 are pending. Claims 1-3, 5-7, 9, 10, 12 and 20-22 have been amended. Claims 1, 5, 9, 12 and 20-22 are the independent claims.

Claims 1-6 and 9-14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) over Applicant's admitted prior art, in particular Figure 5. Applicant submits that the amended independent claims are patentable over the cited art for at least the following reasons.

Amended claim 1 is directed to a code conversion method of receiving a first code string to convert the first code string into a second code string, and to output the same. The method includes: a first step of generating a decoded signal from the first code string in accordance with a decoding method; and a second step of judging whether the decoded signal is an audio signal or a non-audio signal by using information contained in the undecoded first code string, and encoding the decoded signal in accordance with an encoding method on the basis of the judgment to generate a second code string.

In the prior art system illustrated by Figure 5, a first code string is decoded by audio decoding device (1A) into decoded data. The system then judges whether or not the *already decoded data* is noise or not, using the audio detection device (5). That is, the judgment as to whether or not the decoded data is noise in the conventional code conversion device is made based upon an analysis of already decoded data.

On the other hand, as even more clearly recited in amended independent claim 1, the determination as to whether or not the decoded signal is an audio signal or a non-audio signal is made based upon information contained in the *undecoded* first code string, not from the decoded signal itself. Because of this technique, there is no need for the extra structure corresponding to the prior art audio detection device (5).

The other amended independent claims are believed patentable for similar reasons.

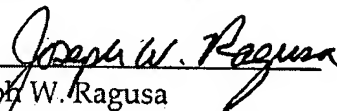
Applicant notes that claim 12 already recited judging based on the header and payload of the first code string, that is, of the undecoded first code string. Thus, the amendments to the other independent claims are simply explicitly reciting this feature, already considered and searched by the Examiner in regard to claim 12, in the other independent claims. In view of the foregoing, entry of this amendment is deemed proper under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116.

The other claims in this application are each dependent from one or another of the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed patentable for the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual reconsideration of the patentability of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

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Respectfully submitted,

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